**Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

to cat, cur, ent.

1.942
F3V66
Reserve

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
US Agricultural Marketing Administration
Washington, D. C.

Arthur C. Bartlett, Chief
Marketing Reports Division

Victory food special.

May 2, 1942

To: Home Economists at Radio Stations

From: Elwyn J. Rowell, Radio Specialist

We'd like to be able to write a personal letter to each of you women who conduct food or homemaking programs over a total of more than 400 stations. However, that is an impracticable thing to do right now.

The important thing is that reports from producing areas indicate lettuce will be in much heavier supply than usual during the period May 11 to 25. Please let the women in your audience hear about this. Enclosed is a piece which you may find helpful.

According to present plans, we will be able to keep you informed about the perishable products which may be in seasonally excessive supply in your area during the coming months. To help make this program possible, representatives of producers and distributors will meet with Department officials here in Washington either May 12 or 13 to work out the final details of the plan whereby the Department will be adequately informed on potential and existing supplies, and will pass this information along at the proper time to the various wholesalers, retailers, and to you and other broadcasters for passing on to the homemakers.

Your comments and suggestions will be appreciated.

Attachment.

U.S. Dept.

USDA
LIB

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Administration
Washington, D. C.

Background Information--
For Use After May 6, 1942

## LETTUCE -- A VICTORY FOOD SPECIAL FOR TWO WEEKS FROM MAY 11 TO 25

An unusually large crop of lettuce is being produced this year with heaviest supplies expected to be on consumer markets during the 2-week period from May 11 to 25. Special merchandising campaigns are being planned by retailers and other food merchants to push the sale of lettuce during this period. Lettuce will be featured nationally as a Victory Food Special through store advertising and displays designed to encourage increased consumption of the plentiful supply that will be available.

The merchandising plan is being carried on in cooperation with the Agricultural Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It is the first drive to be conducted under the AMA program for making more effective use of trade channels and Government resources of marketing and distribution in obtaining the widest possible use of seasonally excessive supplies of perishable farm products, or of supplies affected by market gluts or wartime bottlenecks. Object of the program is to widen market outlets for producers of these products, encourage increased consumption, and pass along to consumers the advantages of supply and price which arise when production and quantities on markets are larger than usual.

### CROP IS BIG

The current crop of lettuce is estimated at 8,000,000 crates as compared with 6,500,000 for the same time of the year in 1941, and an average of over 5,000,000 during the 10-year period, 1931-40. In terms of percentages, the number of crates of lettuce to be marketed until early June

will be about 23 percent larger than that of a year ago, and 55 percent larger than the 10-year average supply. An average crate of lettuce contains five dozen heads of medium size.

The largest part of the crop now remaining for shipment is grown in California, and will come almost entirely from the Salinas-Watsonville-Hollister section, about 75 to 90 miles south of San Francisco. Other lettuce to be marketed during this period will come from the eastern seaboard areas of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and a little from Virginia.

PEAK SUPPLY IN MAY

Most of the lettuce coming on the markets at this time of the year is of the Iceberg type. This is the major type of lettuce grown in California and is shipped to all parts of the United States. Lettuce grown in the eastern sections is of three types -- Iceberg, Big Boston, and Romaine. The merchandising plan for lettuce will in the main feature Iceberg type lettuce, since this kind represents the bulk of the supply which will come on markets in the weeks ahead.

As near as can be determined, harvesting of lettuce in California should reach a peak around the first week of May. Since it takes from 7 to 9 days for shipments from this section to reach terminal markets of the Mid-west and East, largest supplies will be ready for direct sale to consumers during the 2-week period, May 11 to 25. It is during this period that merchants will put special emphasis on the sale of lettuce to housewives and others. Barring adverse weather conditions in the producing areas, the supply of lettuce will not only be heavy but also of reasonably good quality.

## USE AS A FOOD

Lettuce belongs to the family of green, leafy vegetables. Nutritionists think so highly of the leafy greens that they recommend a serving of one kind a day, more if possible.

According to the Bureau of Home Economics, green lettuce is a good source of carotene, which the body can change into vitamin A. It contains some vitamin $B_1$, riboflavin, and vitamin C. It is also a good source of iron and calcium. In general, the thinner and greener the leaf, the better a source of iron and carotene is the lettuce. Bleached lettuce contributes most of these same food values but it rates considerably lower than does green lettuce as a source of the vitamins and minerals mentioned.

## IN THE KITCHEN

Like all leafy greens, lettuce keeps best in a cool, moist place. After lettuce is brought into the kitchen, wash it, then drain it, and store it in a covered vegetable pan.

It is usually best not to cut up the lettuce any sooner than necessary. The exposed portions make a convenient exit for vitamin C. Also, after exposure to air, lettuce sometimes becomes tinged with a reddish brown over the cut surface. The lettuce still is good to eat, but it doesn't have such an attractive appearance.

Here's a way to prepare lettuce when it is desired in whole, separate leaves for use under a salad or to put in a sandwich for crispness. Cut out the core of the lettuce with a sharp pointed knife. Then hold the head under running water so that the water falls into the place where the core was taken out. The leaves will then slip off easily -- each leaf separate, whole, and unbroken.

ON THE TABLE

Lettuce is a perfect vegetable for salad. In every season of the year there's some vegetable that will go with it.... Lettuce also is a natural salad by itself -- a sizable piece of it, or more easily managed shredded lettuce, with the favorite dressing.

When lettuce is low in price and abundant, try it cooked for a change. Here's the way to make tasty old-fashioned wilted lettuce. This recipe makes about 6 servings.

Into a heavy skillet put about 1/4 cup fat, or, if bacon is on hand, cook several slices brown and crisp, and use the bacon fat. Add to the hot fat a small onion, chopped. Cook the onion until it turns yellow. Then add 1/2 cup vinegar. When this is heated, add 2 quarts of garden leaf lettuce or shredded head lettuce. Cover and cook until the lettuce is just wilted. Season with salt and pepper and serve hot -- with bits of the crisp bacon added to it if at hand. Or try it cooled off and served as a salad for a change.

Another good cooked lettuce dish is braised lettuce. To make this, cut 2 hard heads of lettuce into quarters -- lengthwise. Leave a little of the center stem on each section to help hold the leaves together. Heat 4 tablespoons of fat in a large skillet, then put in the lettuce. Cover and cook for 30 minutes or until the lettuce is tender. Turn the lettuce carefully if necessary during the cooking. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and serve on a hot platter.

###